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Bethel Historical Society



Main Street c. 1930

BETHEL'S MAIN STREET THROUGH HISTORY: A HISTORICAL SURVEY

by Rosalind R. Chapman

(Editor's Note: A brief survey of sites on Main Street by Mrs. Chapman is presented here with the hope that the reader will notify the Society of any necessary changes. Mrs. Chapman and the Society are grateful to all who have helped make this article possible.)

The main street of any town is perhaps the most dynamic and important part of a community since it is often essential to business and commerce. Here also are reflected the nature of the community, changes in the town's growth and economic vitality, plus a sense of the life and times of the era.

Bethel's Main Street is believed to have been first laid out in 1821 but the right of way (3½ rods) was not firmly established until 1869. This survey begins as one crosses the railroad tracks on Route 26 and continues up the street to the Common. Sites 1-29 are on the left side of the street while sites 30-56 begin at the corner of Church and Main ("Honest Corner") and continue down Main to Railroad Street.

1 — Charles Mason operated a store here in 1881 for the "Oxford Democrat" recorded he "was burned out" that year "receiving \$3,800 insurance." Woodbury and Purington bought the lot in 1883, building a store which lasted into the early 1900's.

J. B. Ham moved here in 1926 and sold grain and

feed. This business was followed by Davis Lumber Company, Charles Merrill's building supply and woodworking shop, Stanley Davis's Building Supplies and Hearthstone furniture. There was some renovation undertaken for the furniture store, but a fire in the winter of 1972 destroyed the building.

2 — In 1907 the Herrick Bros. (Ed, Albion and George) built a garage on this site. The structure was built by John Swan and was torn down in the 1960's to provide additional parking space for Martha's Restaurant. Others who have operated an auto repair shop here have been Lawrence and Robert Lord, Gilbert Brown, Marcus "Tim" Sweatt, and Roscoe Swain. Ed Herrick had a machine shop under the garage as did Edward Lowell.

3 — This building was once the shop and showroom for E. E. Whitney's Monuments. Martha's Restaurant, now at this site, was opened as Roadside Grille by William and Martha Von Zintl in 1946. The business was purchased in 1968 by Dorothy York and Barbara Bryant who operate it today.

4 — In 1873 Hiram Twitchell, grandson of Eleazor, built this yellow house on this site. Asa Sessions, who was killed unloading a load of logs, was a subsequent owner. Hanover Dowel Company later purchased it and Gilbert Brown and Daniel Forbes were tenants at one time. In 1969 John T. Grover purchased the property and made extensive repairs.

5 — In 1858 the house was marked I. C. Kimball on the wall map. It is known that Kimball's daughter, Mrs. Winslow Heywood, lived there for some time. A March 1889 issue of the Oxford Democrat

indicates that "Charles Demeritt has moved into the Heywood house owned by J. H. Philbrook." Others who have lived here are Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Bean, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lyon, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Bean, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Lyon, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Whitney. The property was once owned by Clarence Annis.

6 — This house was built by Thomas Kendall. Occupants over the years have included Lyman Wheeler, William Young, O. A. Pratt, Donald Christie, Clayton Bane, Norman and June Greig.

7 — On the 1858 map, this lot is marked "J. Brown," probably Josiah Brown who was a shoemaker. Judge Enoch Woodbury came to Bethel in the 1870's, though he first settled on Broad Street, later moved to this site. He was the proprietor of a store here until 1892.

In the "Bethel News" of April 15, 1903, the Woodbury house was offered for sale by J. U. Purington. It was not until October 16, 1911, that Julia Barker purchased the property from the estate of Judge Woodbury.

There have been many real estate transfers and occupants connected with this property. Once it was known as the Chute House, probably after the turn of the century, since there was a Mildred Chute who was a pupil in the town in 1905. They were preceded by the family of Milton Penley, a meat peddler. Mrs. Blanche Flint was their adopted daughter.

Wallace Kilgore, after the new Bethel Inn was built in 1913 employed Smith and Rumery to enlarge the building to its present size, and it was called "Maple Inn." Later the name was changed during World War II to "Gateway House".

Following the Kilgore tenure, Frank Donahue was the proprietor. He was employed there in the 1920's when a fire destroyed much of the hotel.

Others operating the hotel have been Ray Lisherness, Gray, Robie Watson, Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Fredey, William and Elizabeth Davis, Norman and Ethel Johnson who sold to Howard Cole and Norman Greig. Burnham Morrill, John Gasser and Douglas Scott have also owned the property. It became the Sudbury Inn in the late 1940's.

8 — The Young house was built for Charles Mason sometime prior to 1858. Mason operated a store at the foot of Main Street. It was in the Mason family until sold by Harry Mason in the late 1930's to Percy O. Brinck. Mr. Brinck's daughter Kathryn operated a beauty shop upstairs for a short time.

Richard Young purchased the house of the Brinck heirs during the 1940's.

It was later renovated to make three apartments. The building is now owned by Donald Young.

9 — The home of Grace Merrill was marked on the 1858 map as "C. Crosby." Nothing is known of Crosby, however.

In the 1870's the house belonged to Judge Enoch Foster, who had a law office in a small building on the lawn. It was the same building that was later moved to Broad Street and became the Bethel Public Library, later incorporated into the present structure.

The Merrill house was once a one story dwelling but after it was purchased by Josiah U. Purington the following item appeared in the "Oxford

Democrat" for September 8, 1890: "J. U. Purington is having his house raised. Roberts of Hanover has charge, and Gilbert Tuell is the joiner." Purington moved into his re-converted house in May, 1891. He was engaged in the retail business with Enoch Woodbury.

Dr. Widd Twaddle was the next owner of the house after the Puringtons. Charles Merrill purchased the property in the 1940's and it is still owned by his widow. The Merrills renovated part of the ell and barn into a rent.

10 — The house at the lower corner of Main and Vernon Street seems to have been built later than 1880 because no house appears on this lot in the 1880 atlas. It was once the home of Walter Chandler in the early part of this century. After he moved away it became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Flint. It was purchased from the Flint heirs by Dorothy Fadner who renovated it, and sold antiques here until 1969 when she moved to her present Mayville location.

Other families that have lived here are the Ray Juhls and John Vrables.

11 — The place now occupied by Ripley and Fletcher Company filling station seems to have begun as "Mun" Wormell's Marble and Granite Works. On the 1858 map it is designated H. C. Foster. On the 1880 atlas it is marked G. W. Haskell Marble works. A Miss Hattie Foster lived in what is now Mrs. Alma Thurston's house on Vernon Street in the 1920's. For years the lot was vacant and owned by the Congregational Church and was the site of an attractive flower garden. In 1938 Mrs. Tena Thurston gave the lot to her grandson, Richard Young, who built and operated a filling station here; there have been a number of successors.

12 — The Dale Thurston house was built by Robert A. Chapman some time prior to 1858. The first family to have been here was probably Joseph "Snuffy" Dilloway, a man who had a shop in his back yard. There he did his "tinkering" and repairs. On July 3, 1883, Sabina Dilloway, a daughter, sold the place for \$1,050, her father having died.

The Thurston kitchen was once a shed in Albany, moved to the site by ox team. The barn was originally a shed on Grover Hill.

Harry Hastings, the blacksmith, lived here for years. Ruel Chapman who was related to Mr. Hastings lived here until the property was purchased by the Thurston family.

13 — This lot, once part of the Odd Fellows property, was the site of a small house used for many years by C. S. York, the photographer. The "Oxford Democrat" records that fact that Mr. York moved from High Street to Main on June 25, 1889. Irving Kimball, another well-known Bethel photographer, occupied the building in 1896 after Mr. York. After this a restaurant was operated here by Joseph Spinney. Later the property was the home of Mrs. Charles Brown who lived here for many years. Garey York bought the house from M. Brown and resided here before moving across the street. The house was razed in 1971. It is now occupied by a mobile home owned by James Young and family. The York son, David and his family, lived here before Young.

14 — Mount Abram Lodge #31 hall was built in

1890. It continues to be used by the Lodge and Rebekahs. The Gospel Center is also here. Previously Episcopal services were held here. A store once occupied the first floor.

15 — This house was built in 1860. In 1880 it was owned by Mrs. Mary Needham. Her husband Frank was later employed by the chair factory which opened in 1887. Other owners have been Mrs. Fannie Bisbee Lovejoy, Lucien Littlehale, Henry Flint, Mrs. Fred Edwards and the current one, Mrs. Cecil Conrad. Tenants who have lived here have been Jasper Cates, Jesse Doyen, Mrs. Dorothy Tucker, Richard Waldron, Joseph Perry, Miss Helen Varner and Mrs. Leona Flint.

16 — Conrad's Tourist Home was built by Nelson Springer in 1906. At that time he owned the dowel mill (now Hanover Dowel) below the railroad tracks, and his "new house" was wired for electricity thus becoming the first residence in town to be wired for this service. The Springers later moved to California and the house was purchased by Fred Edwards who lived here until his death in 1947. After the death of Mrs. Edwards in 1962 the property was willed to Mrs. Cecil Conrad.

17 — Bethel Methodist Church is the second such building on the site. The first built at a cost of \$300 in 1860 was destroyed by a cyclone on September 18, 1891. A contemporary account described the scene: "The immense steeple yielded to the fury of the tempest, fell with a tremendous crash full length of the church. The organ and almost every pew were completely wrecked. The bell fell to the first floor. Everything went down but the walk."

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SOCIETY ANNOUNCES PROGRAM FOR 1979

The program committee of the Bethel Historical Society announces the program for 1979 as follows: January 4: "Oriental Influences Upon American Decorative Arts", Films: "Chelsea Porcelain" and "The Chinese Village"; February 1: "Bethel's Main Street Through History", Education and Research Committee; March 1: "Three Centuries of Glass", Film: "Assignment in Glassmaking", Museum Committee; April 5: "The State of Maine Building and All Soul's Chapel", Faye Walker, Executive Director, Poland Spring Preservation Society; May 6: "Tate House", Frances Peabody, Tate House, Portland; June 7: "The Shaker Experience in Maine", Br. Theodore Johnson, The United Society of Shakers, Sabbathday Lake; July 5: "Middle Intervale in Bethel's Past", Picnic at 6 p. m., meeting at Middle Intervale Meeting House; August 2: "Bethel's Photographers", Exhibit; September 6, Annual Meeting, pot luck supper at 6:30; October 4: "What's It?"; November 1: "Bethel Library Association: Its First One Hundred Years", Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Secretary, Bethel Library Association; December 6: Annual Christmas Program. Unless otherwise noted all meetings will be held in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House, 15 Broad Street and will begin promptly at 7:30 p. m.

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3 PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Society is well into what promises to be a busy and eventful year. I hope that during 1978-79 we will be able to continue our progress in the following areas: (1) increase the Society's involvement with the local schools and expand adult education programs; (2) continue to find new ways to increase museum attendance, through greater publicity; (3) begin to plan for commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the Indian Raid in 1981. I wish to urge anyone who would like to offer ideas and/or assistance in any of these projects to discuss them with the director or me.

Catherine Newell

NEW OFFICERS: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Edith Eaton Eddy,
Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees

Born in Collinsville, Connecticut, Edith Eaton Eddy attended Collinsville High School and joined the Connecticut State Board of Education immediately upon her graduation. In six years there, she was secretary to the District Superintendent of Schools and worked with the Assistant Superintendent in the preparation of a textbook dealing with education of retarded children. She next went to Washington, where she did personnel classification, both for the Federal Housing Administration and later for Airtronics, Inc.

In 1935 she married Donald B. Eddy, who worked for the U. S. Department of State, and sometimes accompanied him on international conference assignments abroad. When Mr. Eddy was appointed to the Foreign Service, she and her three children lived in Geneva, Switzerland for a time. Other foreign assignments of some years duration were London and Bangkok, Thailand. Having visited fifty-five countries, she appreciates Maine all the more. Mrs. Eddy is a life member of the Society and has been a member of the Museum Committee since its inception in 1972.

Donald G. Bennett, Vice-President

Born in Arlington, Massachusetts, Donald Bennett graduated from Gould Academy (1952); received his AB degree in history from St. Benedict's College, Atchison, Kansas (1970) and his MA in International Relations from the University of Southern California, UK Program (1974). He retired from the Army in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (1977) last serving as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Intelligence). During his Army career, he served four tours of duty overseas: Germany, England and twice in Vietnam. He is married to the former Katherine Larsen of Baltimore, Maryland; they have one daughter, April, age eight. He is currently distributor for an advertising publication in Maine and New Hampshire and resides on the north end of what was once Riverside Farms.

EDITOR'S CORNER

The response to the plea in the last issue of the "Courier" for candle holders, andirons, side chairs, paintings, dishes, and chests of drawers resulted in some additions to the Museum. More are still needed and inquiries should be directed to the curator or any member of the museum committee.

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Had it been an hour later the results might have been awful as the regular prayer meeting would have been in progress."

In December 1891, the Society decided to rebuild at once and before the next Conference the sum of \$1,350 had been raised. Persons from other denominations, also. Besides cash subscriptions, friends gave an organ, a chandelier, and furniture. The new structure still standing today was dedicated February 14, 1893, free of debt. A basement was added at a later date, probably around 1915.

17 — Brooks Brothers Hardware building appears on the 1880 map as a long extended structure. One side was occupied by A. B. Stevens Store and Tin Works. The Philbrook Street side housed the store of Samuel D. Philbrook. Mr. Philbrook sold to N. F. Brown in 1893. Gilbert Tuell once used a part of these buildings as a carpenter's shop. D. Grover Brooks bought the business from Brown after World War I. Following his death in 1955, it became the property of his sons, Dana and Donald. The business was incorporated in 1954.

18 — Ralph Young's house appears on the 1878 map as being joined to Samuel Philbrook's store. Presumably it was built by Mr. Philbrook. Fred Edwards owned the property after Philbrook and it was purchased by Ralph Young from Edwards more than fifty years ago.

19 — Sunri Ski Shop building was built some time prior to 1858 for at that time it was owned by L. Twitchell. Samuel Dunn purchased it April 26, 1868 and Mrs. Irving Ames bought it from the Dunn estate in 1908. During the Civil War it is believed that gun powder was stored here. The house remained in the Ames family until purchased by Elwyn Dickey in 1968. Dickey sold it to the Kailey family in 1974 who converted it to the present shop. In 1963. It presumably was built by Hiram Young who ran a store at the head of Main Street. Others living here have included William Hopkins, Ralph Sawyer, Wallace Warren, Jack Gill and Edward King. Dr. G. L. Kneeland lived here and had an osteopathic and optometry practice in the front of the building. It is currently two rental units.

21 — The site of "Mothers'" was marked "T. Barker" in 1858 and "L. T. Barker" in 1880. The latter was undoubtedly Leander T. Barker, undertaker, liquor agent and town clerk. When L. T. Barker died the agency was taken over by Hanno Packard. Following the death of Leander's son, Philip, the property was purchased by Jesse Chapman. In the 1930's it was used as a restaurant and tourist home known as "Duck Inn." Mrs. Jesse Chapman sold the property to Michael O'Donnell in 1974 and it is now a restaurant.

22 — The site of Charlie's Place and April Lynn Flower Shop began as the Central Service Station, one of the first gas stations in town. It was initially operated by Frank Robertson then by Jesse Chapman. Taxi service was added in later years plus a bowling alley with rents upstairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Eames were operating the business in the 1940's when it burned resulting in damages of \$4,000. The building was repaired and more alleys added, replacing the garage space. Mrs. Jesse Chapman succeeded the Eames family in operating the business and for a time Ernest An-

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gevine was the proprietor. The building is now owned by Charles Farrar and the bowling alleys have been altered for the flower shop, restaurant and Farrar Dance Studio.

23 — This building was built in 1859 by D. A. Twitchell as "a store and dwelling house" according to an item published in the "Bethel Courier" on July 29 of that year. In 1867 Abner Davis and Moses Coburn Foster sold dry goods, clothing, crockery and grain on this site. Davis sold to Foster on May 3, 1867 his interest in the business. Other merchants who have operated here have been C. K. Fox and Calvin Bisbee. H. I. Bean was once in partnership with Fox. In 1936, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Brown came to Bethel from Fryeburg and the Variety Store has been operated by the Brown family even since, the Browns' son and wife, James and Beatrice, being the current proprietors. At one time Miss Lucy Fox, sister of Clarence, served meals in the apartment upstairs.

24 — The Michael O'Donnell house was here prior to 1858. At that time it was occupied by Rev. E. A. Buck, the Congregationalist minister. It is said that this house was moved to this site but no record has been found to prove it. Old deeds refer to it as a parsonage but the details are sketchy. C. M. Wormell, Bethel sheriff and detective lived here for years. Dr. I. H. Wight lived here from 1902 until his death in 1931. His nephew Dr. Harry Wilson assumed his practise and resided here when he first came to Bethel. Dr. Wilson sold to Jesse Chapman. Earlon Paine was the next owner, selling to attorney Michael J. O'Donnell in 1968.

25 — On the map of 1858 the house now owned by Wendell Sharp was marked "G. Blake", who once owned a store at the corner of Main and Church Streets. On the 1880 atlas Miss S. Hall is listed as living here. Elmer Young the harness maker lived here and was survived by his wife Annie. Following her death, the house was vacant until purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Addison Saunders who lived here for many years. The Sharps briefly ran an antique and clock repair business from this site, called "Tinker's Dam."

26 — The Cole Block was built in 1891 by Fred and Elmer Cole. No building stood on the lot previously and the Cole brothers soon went bankrupt in the venture. On the first floor were King's Jewelry Store and Miss Burnham's Millinery. Later Edward Lyon ran a jewelry and gift shop in this location. The other side was the headquarters of the Bethel National Bank and the Bethel Savings Bank. The Bethel National Bank was succeeded by Casco Bank and Trust in November of 1945 and moved to the Lyon Store in November, 1946 and remained here until 1968. Herrick and Park had a law office on the side of the building. Further back was the Bethel News office, founded in 1895 and succeeded by the present Bethel Citizen in 1908. Upstairs was the town offices, telephone office, and Odeon Hall where Gould graduations were once held, as well as winter Chatauquas, Prof. Chapman's concerts, Roman Catholic services, dances, town meetings, silent movies, Harvey Bragdon's "talkies", plus minstrel shows and dramatic presentations. Today the building houses the town offices and Early Real Estate, and the "Citizen". Odeon Hall is no longer used.

27 — The site of the new Bethel Savings Bank

was the location of a building constructed by Robert A. Chapman and later sold to Samuel A. Brock, a hardware merchant. Others doing business here were William and Thomas Hastings, G. L. Thurston, J. P. Butts, Roger Reynolds, Specialty Shop, E. P. Lyon, the post office (1939-42), Warren Bean's appliance store and oil business, Roland Kneeland's appliances, and Wheeler's mica shop. Afterward this building was converted to a laundromat which was still in business just prior to being razed in 1973 and a new bank building dedicated in 1974.

28 — The so-called Pushard Drug Store block, destroyed by fire in 1916 presumably began as the building mentioned in the "Bethel Courier" of July 27, 1860, which stood where the brick block does today on Broad Street. It was moved to this location and housed the shoe shop of A. P. Knight on the upper story and the dental office of Dr. Barker. Also Miss Towne had a milliners shop on the lower floor. Later Pushard's drug store occupied the first floor with Dr. Francis B. Tuell, dentist, upstairs. When fire gutted the building in 1916 Tristram Durrell died helping at the hose cart. Dr. E. L. Brown was overcome by smoke as he was carrying out the dental cabinets from the upstairs office he occupied with Dr. Tuell. He was taken across the street and revived. The lot was cleared. The 1858 map lists an Eating House in this approximate location but nothing is known of it.

29 — On the 1858 map the corner now occupied by Mrs. Annie Hastings was marked Richard A. Frye's law office and Hiram Young's Harness Shop. Young's Harness Shop was upstairs and on the first floor he had a liquor agency for some time. His son Elmer, continued to make harnesses in the days before automobiles. Previous to the arrival of Lawyer Frye it is believed that John Oliver the hatter had a place of business here, as well as his dwelling. This building was later moved down Church Street across from the Congregational Church and his shop moved to the area where the Opera House Restaurant is today. Others connected with this site have been Charles Lucas, Louis Ramsell, and John S. Allen, grocers. Allen was killed by his horse. Fred Wheeler ran an ice cream parlor and grocery here. Lepine Morse (known as "Leaping Morse") ran a grocery here also. Frank Goddard, telegraph operator and photographer, had an apartment and studio here. Mrs. Henry Hastings Sr. moved here when the Hastings house on Church Street was razed to make room for the Gould Academy Field House. Henry Hastings Sr. who came here in 1899 succeeded Richard Frye in this location. Upton his death in 1934, Gerard Williams, an attorney from Farmington, practiced law here. Following service in World II, Mr. Williams returned to Farmington. When Henry Hastings, Jr., was admitted to the bar he opened his office here. Since Mr. Hastings death in 1968 the office has been vacant.

30 — "Honest Corner" has been the site of a store for nearly a hundred years. It began as the home of Marshall Bonney, the early Bethel cabinet-maker. It was also the home of Hiram Allen. In 1836 the property was acquired by Gilman Chapman for \$700. Mr. Chapman moved the building from this site down the street where it is now the home of Donald and Eleanor Brooks. The following

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year Mr. Chapman built the store on the corner and it had a series of owners before a fire devastated it in December 1906: Gilman Blake, Moses Foster, Gilman Bean, George Furbush, Charles Lucas. In 1910 Moses Hastings had the store rebuilt (later owned by Daniel S. Hastings) and other merchants following him have been Louis Ramsell, Philip Burns, Ralph Young, Maurice McInnis, Stuart Martin, Paul Shaw, and Harry Dunn.

Dr. Francis Tuell had his dental offices upstairs after the Pushard building burned. Dr. E. L. Brown and Dr. John Trinward also had offices here. The Masonic Hall was also upstairs in this building until the Lodge moved to the former Christian Science Church on Chapman Street. In 1891 the Post Office was on this site. In the 1950's Edward Lyon had a jewelry shop here and later for a short time there was an ice cream shop. When Harry Dunn sold out his grocery business the building was vacant until Dr. and Mrs. John Willard purchased it and renovated the interior creating two apartments on the second floor and a gift and fabric shop on the first. The building now houses the real estate offices of Jeffrey Prest and the Bethel Food Center.

31 — The Freeman Block stood on the site of the Willard parking lot. Upstairs was the print shop of the "Bethel Courier," the town's first newspaper which began in 1858 and ceased publication in 1861. N. T. True was the editor and the paper died when he resigned from Gould and left Bethel. This space was later Abbott's Jewelry Store where a fire in 1867 burned a hole through the floor without causing a blaze. The "Courier" reported that an oyster saloon and confectionery store were being operated on the first floor by a Mr. Ayer. Later this building was replaced by Elmer Young's Harness Shop and Elmer Randall's Shoe Store (succeeded by Elmer Allen). It was later used as the American Legion Post home and the building was razed by the Willards.

Thomas LaRue had a shoe repair business here from about 1918 until his death in 1941. Prior to that, the telephone office was here. LaRue was succeeded by Royal Hodsdon for a brief time.

32 — The Wiley Block formerly known as the Swift Block was built by Newton Swift who came to town from Norway. It housed the Swift store and the post office where the drug store has long been. In 1858 Samuel Gibson had his law office here and Patrick McCloskey had a tailor shop on this site. It was Newton Swift's daughter who married Goodwin R. Wiley who opened a pharmacy in 1861. The Swifts lived in an apartment upstairs. W. E. Bosserman, son of the Universalist minister, succeeded Wiley in the drug store. Alton Carroll for well over forty years handled the soda fountain and was the trusted pharmacist in Bosserman's. It was from the Bosserman estate (E. L. Brown, son-in-law of Bosserman) that Harold Clukekey acquired the building and business. The post office was in this building for many years until the late 1930's. In its place there was a beauty shop and later the Shoe Rack. This space was later added to the pharmacy. Mr. Clarence Hall had his barber shop in this structure beginning at the end of the nineteenth century. His son, Fred, continued in business here until the late 1940's when Arthur Guernsey followed Mr. Hall. Stanley Fox succeeded Guernsey. The

building is now owned by Charles Primozech and continues as a pharmacy.

33 — The Mrs. Raymond R. Tibbetts house was built sometime prior to 1858 by Almon Godwin who came here from Rumford. He was long an officer of the law in Bethel, familiarly known to some as "Blueberry Eye." His death was said to have been caused by taking the wrong medicine in the middle of the night. Without light he swallowed a bottle of iodine instead of his medicine and died May 31, 1895. Tenants through the years have been Dr. Hill and his mother, then Dr. Sturtevant briefly and finally Dr. R. R. Tibbetts who came to Bethel in 1905 and purchased the property from Mrs. Edwin C. Rowe.

34 — Gilman Chapman built a house on the spot where the Queen Anne style house stands today, now owned by Early Real Estate. Chapman's house was a white one with large pillars on the front. From the Chapman estate the house was sold to John Philbrook who had it moved to the site of the Gould parking lot on Elm Street. That same year (1895) Philbrook undertook construction of the present house at a cost of \$8,000. Gilbert Tuell was the contractor. For many years after the Philbrooks' death, the house stood empty. In 1938 Clarence Bennett bought the property and built the garage adjoining the lot. In 1969 Mrs. Bennett sold it to Gould Academy and it was used for faculty housing before the property was acquired by Early Real Estate in 1977.

35 — The Angevine garage on the corner of Main and Elm was built by Clarence Bennett in 1938. It is now owned by Ernest Angevine who runs a chain saw and snowmobile agency, also servicing small engines.

36 — In 1858 J. E. Small "Daguerian Artist" had his shop on the lower corner of Main and what is now Elm Street. Later the house was owned and occupied by Charles Johnson, the postmaster. On the 1880 map the house is marked "Johnson Heirs." Mrs. Frances Tuell's sister, Annie was Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Mildred Tuell Carlson was born here nearly a century ago. Miss Anne Maria Robertson, daughter of Sylvester Robertson, the early Bethel cabinetmaker, bought the property from the Johnson Heirs and lived in an upstairs apartment until her death in 1944 at the age of 101. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Robertson lived downstairs for many years and in later years, Mrs. Robertson ran a bakery. The house was razed in 1959 to provide parking space for patrons of the new Thunderbird Motel.

37 — Sylvester Robertson, Bethel's early cabinetmaker had a shop and house on this site. His house was one of Bethel village's oldest and was set back from the street. Robertson's daughter, Anne Maria sold the house upon her father's death to Edward Clark whose son Irving lived here for many years. The house and lot was sold in 1940 to Max Zallen and he constructed a theater on the front of the lot. The house was then occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Louis Paul, Mr. Paul being the projectionist for the theater. Frederick Grover was the manager of the facility which enjoyed much success until the popularity of television. It was converted in 1959 by Zallen to a motel, "The Thunderbird," which operated for a few years. The old Clark house was moved to the rear of the theater

6 structure and incorporated as part of the motel operation. In 1966 the motel was purchased by Gould Academy for additional dormitory space but in 1977 was closed and is now for sale.

38 — The house where Donald Brooks and family live was brought down from "Honest Corner." It became the Methodist parsonage in 1881, purchased from Nathan Ethridge. Subsequent owners have been Norman Sanborn, Edwin Barnard and Donald Brooks.

39 — The first building on this lot was built for E. G. Goddard who had a cabinet shop adjacent to the lot. Mr. Goddard was also the town's undertaker. The house was probably built in 1883 as the "Oxford Democrat" reported that year "Mr. Goddard is buying furniture for his new house." In 1892 the property was purchased by Hanno A. Packard from Pinkney Burnham who acquired it from Goddard. He erected a small building in the yard which was used as a mortuary room. In 1913, fire destroyed the main house. The Packards lived temporarily in the undertaking office. Fred Tibbetts, also an undertaker, bought the lot and built the house which also burned in March, 1963. In the 1920's Elmer Allen purchased the Tibbetts property and made extensive alterations, creating three apartments. Mr. Allen willed the property to Harvey Sweetser who owned it at the time of the fire. Following the fire, Mrs. Myron Bryant purchased the lot and a new brick building was built for Bryant's I.G.A. which opened in 1964. Her son Richard sold the business in 1968 to Everett Lidstone and there have been numerous managers since that time.

40 — The little mortuary shop had various businesses in it after it ceased to be used for undertaking purposes. Elmer Randall had a shoe repair business here and a clothing business was there in the early 1930's. It was the "Bethel Restaurant" until it was destroyed by fire in March, 1963. Proprietors of the restaurant included Mrs. Sadie Brooks, Elmer Allen, Hazel Wheeler and Florice Paul, Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Eames, Elmer Bean, Robert York, Mrs. Mary Bishop, and Harvey Sweetser.

41 — There was a wooden frame building immediately to the west of the present Naimey Block. This remained after the boarding house was torn down and housed a fruit store called Sam's Fruit Store (Sam Jacobsen, prop.), then it became Dave's Fruit Store (David Feldman), and finally Harold Chamberlin's. There were also several apartments in the structure and a barber shop run initially by Lester Enman, then Fred Hall, Harry Swanson, and Herschel Walker. It was razed in the mid 1950's.

42 — The site of the Naimey Block apparently began as a cabinet shop for Elijah Goddard. In 1892 Mr. Goddard improved the building, adding a porch and a show window for all lines of furniture.

Following the Goddards the property was maintained as a boarding house ("Codfish Inn") and livery stable. Stanley Wentzell sold it to Mitchell (Mike) Naimey who razed the buildings and built the present structure in 1922. On the west side was Seaver's bakery later Sherman Allen's store, the center the A. & P. Store and on the east side a clothing store run by Naimey who lived upstairs. Subsequent owners have been Elsie Robinson, Har-

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SENATOR MUSKIE DEDICATES BROAD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Senator Edmund S. Muskie, who is well-known for his interest in historic preservation and was a sponsor of the 1966 act establishing the national register system, was the featured speaker at ceremonies officially designating Broad Street as a national historic district on July 29. Well over one hundred members and guests heard Muskie speak on the lawn of the Dr. Moses Mason House. Following the Senator's address, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, conducted a walking tour of the street. After a delicious luncheon prepared and served by volunteers, Society Director Stanley Howe gave a slide lecture on historic Broad Street.

ANNUAL MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 7

At the annual meeting this year held at Society headquarters and preceded by a pot luck supper, the following were elected: Catherine Newell, president; Donald Bennett, vice-president; Edith Eddy, secretary; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, treasurer; Judith Haskell, trustee for 3 years. The contributions of retiring president John J. Willard, Jr., secretary Judith Haskell and trustee Donald Eddy were praised by Margaret Joy Tibbetts, who also was re-elected chairman of the Board of Trustees. Mrs. Newell was elected Vice-Chairman.

A special feature of this meeting was the opening of the Outside-In exhibit, a project sponsored by the Society in cooperation with the Maine State Museum through a grant from the Maine Council on the Humanities and Public Policy. The project was designed to create awareness of the role of outside influences upon the historical development of the community and ranged from the railroad, to fashions to summer visitors. A film "The White Heron" based on the short story by Sarah Orne Jewett and slides focusing upon outside influences in Bethel highlighted the discussion for members and guests.

NEW LIFE MEMBER

The newest life member is Clarence A. Bartlett of Nashua, New Hampshire. Mr. Bartlett is a descendant of the Bartlett family of Bethel.

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BOOK REVIEW

The History of Current Maine Newspapers: Alan Robert Miller, Eastland Press Inc., Lisbon Falls, Maine, 1978, 627 pp. Softbound.

This book is a useful summary for reference purposes. It is a methodical compilation of material on all newspapers currently being published in Maine arranged alphabetically by municipalities. In each instance there is an account of the origins of the paper, sometimes with interesting material on early founders and editors. Interviews with current proprietors are frequently included. An effort is made to project a sense of what each paper is like today with quotations from important stories, illustrations of the front page, or typical headlines.

Many of the early Maine papers were virtually one man affairs in small remote communities. Financial problems were common, and in some cases the struggle to keep the paper going went on for years. The editors varied in their business ability—new owners discovered that one editor in a small coastal community had not collected subscription fees for years. Many of the early editors were strong Republicans, as were the majority of their readers in rural areas, and often the papers crusaded strongly for temperance in their early periods.

Today the majority of the smaller papers concentrate on local issues. In several towns new owners have come in from out of state, younger couples who consider owning a paper a pleasant occupation which they can combine with small town life. They have changed the local papers, but the emphasis is still on local news. (One of these new editors was proud of the fact that his paper had carried a story when a cat had kittens and resented local criticism.)

Professor Miller does not comment on the quality of papers or analyze characteristics of Maine journalism. He draws no general conclusions and does not attempt to look beneath the surface. His account of "The Citizen" relies heavily on quotations from Bethel Historical Society's special edition, and he was obviously much taken with the "Citizen's" premises which are indeed fascinating. But his accounts of the larger papers, where first hand visits are less rewarding are not adequate. For many "The Portland Press Herald" and "The Lewiston Daily Sun," for example, are major sources of information on world, national and state developments; Professor Miller does not deal with the manner in which these developments are presented or with the impact of these larger papers upon the State as a whole.

This book would be more interesting if it were a real history which analyzed Maine journalism and drew conclusions about the extent of the achievement—or lack of achievement—in the Maine press. As it is, it is a convenient compilation of material which provides an introduction to all papers in Maine, some of which merit further study.

—Margaret Joy Tibbetts

BETHEL HISTORY COURSES OFFERED THIS FALL

Twenty eight persons enrolled in the seven week Bethel history course offered this autumn by the society. Topics included mills and commerce, re-

ligion, education, government and politics, hotels and resorts, plus agriculture. The course was coordinated by Society Director Stanley Howe who also delivered several of the lectures. Also lecturing during the course were Society Trustee Chairman Margaret Joy Tibbetts and Vice President Donald Bennett.

For many, the highlight of the course was the field trip held on October 29, beginning at the site of the Anasagunticook House in Northwest Bethel and including visits to former ferry crossings, graveyards, meeting houses and mill sites. It is anticipated that this popular course will be offered again at some future date.

Also offered this fall was a seminar on genealogical research through the cooperation of the Society and S. A. D. 44 adult education department conducted by Society Director Howe.

EIGHT HUNDRED VISITORS TO MOSES MASON HOUSE IN 1978

Approximately eight hundred persons visited the Moses Mason House during the 1978 season. While attendance at most Maine museums was less than usual, nearly a third more visited the Moses Mason museum than in 1977.

As in the past most visitors were from Maine (217), but Massachusetts provided nearly as many (212). Twenty nine other states were represented plus Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and six nations, the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico, India, West Germany and Saudi Arabia.

On October 14, a coffee was held to honor all the volunteers who had contributed to the success of the 1978 season. Those honored were Maxine Brown, Sylvia Dunham, Rosalind Chapman, Hazel Wheeler, Edith Eddy, Mary Valentine, Carolyn Brooks, Beatrice Conrad, Ernestine Jackson, Frances Harding, Agnes Haines, Floribel Haines, Ruth Ames, Amy Davis, Helen Morton, Florence Hastings, Persis Post, Margaret Tibbetts, Judith Haskell, Geraldine Howe, Steve Seames, Sue Wight, and Marge Noll. Special recognition was given Barbara H. Brown who has again provided the museum with such attractive floral arrangements.

COMMITTEES, 1979

The following committees were approved by the Trustees on September 14: Building: Donald Eddy, Chairman, E. M. Quinn, Julia Brown, Richard Verville; Garden and Grounds: Sudie Vachon, Chairwoman, Clare Smith, Gertrude Hutchins, Hazel Wheeler, Donald Bennett, Margaret Tibbetts, Jane Vogt; Education and Research: Randall Bennett, Chairman, Clare Smith, Catherine Newell, Rosalind Chapman, Elizabeth Smith, Virginia Kelly, Judith Haskell, Nancy Bentley, Sue Wight, Kurt Brown, Alvin Barth and Mary Valentine; Membership: E. M. Quinn, Chairman, John Willard, Marge Noll, Mary Valentine, Barbara D. Brown; Program: Geraldine Howe, Chairwoman, Edith Eypper, Maxine Brown, Helen Morton, Richard Fraser, Karen Brown, Jean Ness; Museum: Marge Noll and Judith Haskell, Chairwomen, Floribel Haines, Nell Valentine, Rosalind Chapman, Margaret Davis, Agnes Haines, Richard Fraser, Suzanne Fiske, Sue Chamberlin; Finance: John Willard, Chairman, Margaret Tibbetts, Pearline McMillin, James D. Alger,

8 Donald Bennett; Special Project: Carolyn Brooks, Chairwoman, Sarah Stevens, Marguerite Quinn, Pearline McMillin, Persis Post, Sylvia Wight, Julia Brown.

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old Chamberlin, Norman and June Greig, John E. Grover, and the present one, Esther Crockett. The Post Office came to this location in 1942 and the Bethel Spa followed Harold Chamberlin's store in 1951. Dr. John Trinward moved upstairs in the building in the mid 1950's. John Rubino of Rumford operated a store at the present Spa location in the early 1940's.

43 — The lot now owned by John E. Grover (the Brass Buckle, Fashion Basket and Bethel Spa Motel) began with a building known as Rialto Hall, a place for dancing and roller skating. The building was probably built before 1880, since town meetings were held here in 1886. In 1895 it was taken over by the Chair Factory as a finishing and storage room. The building was destroyed by fire in 1898. Older residents later recalled the explosions when pots of varnish and shellac ignited during the blaze. In 1901 Calvin Bisbee, who ran the general store on the site of Brown's Variety Store, bought the lot and constructed a grist mill here. Sanding Brook which runs by the property today provided adequate water power but the mill operations blocked off the deeper hole which had been a place for fishing. The grist mill did not continue long and about 1919 the property became the J. B. Ham Grain mill, first operated by Wesley Wheeler, then by John Harrington. In 1927 Ham moved to the location by the tracks. In the mid 1930's this was the site of a tavern selling 3.2 beer operated by Bill Barney. When Mike Naimey enlarged his clothing store in the brick building, the A. & P. moved to this building. Ralph Burris who followed Hutchins as manager purchased the property and in the mid 1940's renovated the building making two apartments on the second floor. After the A. & P. moved to Railroad Street in 1968, Norman Greig acquired the property and during his ownership the building was occupied by the Sunri Ski Shop and Rolfe's Apparel. Greig sold to Grover in 1970.

44 — Next to the present Grover building was a two story store building with an apartment upstairs, believed to have been moved to this site from the corner of High and Church Streets on what is now the Gould campus. It was known then as the Charles Grover House. When the building was converted to a store, it was first occupied by Miss Laura M. Stearns. Her assistant was Mrs. Willey and later Bessie Kenny Stanley. Miss Stearns and her father lived upstairs. Later the business was moved to the former Chapman brick block on Broad Street. Other businesses in the building were Erma Young's Store, First National Store (Norman Hall, Mgr., followed by Clyde Brooks), Catholic Church Room, Fred Hall's Barber Shop and Ruth Lord's Beauty Shop. The building was razed in 1967.

45 — A small wooden building stood next to the previous structure. This housed a barber shop and pool room with an apartment in the rear.

46 — This structure was later incorporated into Bryant's Market building but was originally the home of the Bethel Lower Hose Company where a

hose and cart were available for fire protection in the lower village. There was an apartment on the building's second floor. The first fire bell in town stood beside the sidewalk on timbers in case of alarm and the first siren was on top of this building until moved to the site near the Common after the Lower Company disbanded. This building is believed to have been moved to this site from High Street and was later used by Elmer Bean as an insurance office. Charles Davis also had an office here and sold farm machinery. About 40 years ago C. A. Austin ran a second hand auction shop in the building. Also at one time there was a card playing room ("Monte Carlo") in the rear of the building. It was torn down in 1967.

47 — In the 1870's Chauncey Bryant began as a dealer of meats, driving a cart in the area. Soon business grew and he was able to establish a small store on the corner of Main and High in 1876. As the business prospered the building was enlarged and an apartment built on the second floor. About 1900 William C. Bryant joined his father and later Myron, son of William C., became a partner in the business. In 1929, the market affiliated with the I.G.A. chain and business continued here until moved to the present location further up the street. The site is now occupied by the Casco Bank and Trust Company.

48 — The Civil War Soldier's monument was erected in 1908 and replaced the wooden bandstand once on the site.

49 — The building now Dunn apartments was built by Joseph Twitchell some time before 1858. Col. Clark S. Edwards ran a store from this location prior to the Civil War. The property was later owned by Cyrus Wormell who sold it to Rev. Benjamin Foster of Newport. After Foster, Eli Stearns, who had a slaughter house near Alder River Bridge, lived here and ran a boarding house. He was followed by Harvey Bragdon who enlarged the property and created the apartments. Upon his death it was purchase by Butler Dunn. The original barn burned and the present one was built about 1908.

50 — There was no building here according to the 1858 wall map. On the 1880 map the property is marked "C. Mason." Presumably, Charles Mason ran a store here. Tenants have been Garey's Laundry and Guy Jack who in the early 1920's ran a mortuary and restaurant here. Dr. S. S. Greenleaf later took over the undertaking business from

Jack. In 1922, the Star Lunch opened for business here, operated by Frank Flint, who was followed by Mrs. Elsie Robertson and Mrs. Sadie Allen. Asa Sessions had an auto showroom here also. Clayton Mills bought the property following the closing of the restaurant and converted the building into apartments.

51 — This building was not here in 1858 but appears in the 1880 map and was the property of Samuel D. Philbrook. Others who have lived here include Henry Perkins, barber; C. S. York, photographer; Fritz Goddard, local express driver, and Sidney Jodrey, who with his wife are remembered for their cottage cheese and milk. In the 1950's Mr. and Mrs. Gary York acquired the property and made extensive alterations.

52 — Daniel Grout once had a small house here until it was purchased by Seth Walker and removed. In the 1960's the lot was purchased by Norman Greig from the Bean heirs and he moved Dr. Boynton's former office from Paradise Hill to the lot. For a short time the building was used as an insurance office and by the school district (1966-68), and was the office of Dr. Loy S. Harrell until purchased by Dr. John Martin of Harrison. Martin sold to Dr. Leonard Shaw, an optometrist, who operates a practice here.

53 — This house was built by Abernathy Grover in 1875. He sold to Seth Walker who became a partner of O. H. Mason in 1881. Ernest Walker succeeded his father and lived here until his death, and in 1941 the property was purchased by P. H. Chadbourne who sold it to Albert Bean in 1955. The Beans sold it to Douglas Bane. It was acquired by Garrett and Melody Bonnema in 1974 who also operate a pottery shop and gallery here.

54 — In 1958, Robert A. Chapman had a building on this site. Fletcher Russell, son of Abraham Russell later had a dwelling and blacksmith shop here. He moved to Vermont and it is believed that Samuel D. Philbrook, a cattle dealer, purchased the property from him in 1860. The house burned in 1878 and he employed Edmund Merrill, Jr., to build the present structures. In 1907 the place became the property of Mortimer Thurston who came here from Newry. He was a cattle dealer and made good use of the large barn. Mr. Thurston's daughter, Mrs. Thomas Brown, inherited the property and for several years the Browns ran a tourist home here. The property is now owned by the Browns' son, Norris,

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (4) special library and archival privileges |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (5) semi-annual newsletter |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (6) reduced course fees |

To the Membership Committee: I am interested in becoming a member of the Society.
(Please Print)

Name

Address

Signature

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217

.....Sustaining \$2.50 (Individual)

.....Contributing \$10.00

.....Patron \$25.00

.....Students (under 18 years) \$1.00

.....Life over 55 years \$50.00 single

.....Life over 55 years \$75.00 couple

.....Life under 55 years \$100.00 single

.....Life under 55 years \$150.00 couple

who has leased it to become a health center for the area.

55 — In 1892 Samuel D. Philbrook built a shop here which was used by his son, Dana, for watch and clock repairs. Wade Thurston, son of Mortimer, who owned the adjacent property, moved the shop and built the present house about 1914. Fire damaged the house in the 1930's but was repaired. Mrs. Wade Thurston now lives here and rents an apartment in the rear of the building.

56 — This building began as a store built by Robert A. Chapman in the early 1870's. The "Oxford Democrat" in 1874 recorded that Chapman was "adding paint and blinds" to his new store that spring. Since his brother Edbridge had moved to Portland following the disastrous fire of 1865 near the Common, Enoch Woodbury succeeded to partnership with Chapman. This store was sold to Ira C. Jordan on September 8, 1890. Jordan, a former store keeper in Locke Mills, painted the buildings and added the porch. Here one could buy almost anything from shoes to codfish. After Ira Jordan's death he was succeeded in the business by his son Harry who continued the business until the 1920's. The Jordans lived upstairs over the store. Following the end of this business, the store floor was renovated into an apartment. Tenants have included Lawrence Lord, Bud Pratt, Harry Sawin, Norman Hall, Guy Gibbs, Donald Bennett, Patrick Grenier, and John Witter, currently the owner of the building. The basement apartment was made for Mrs. Fern Jordan's daughter, Mrs. Perry, and her child during World War II. There were livery stables in the back of the building.

MIDDLE INTERVALE MEETING HOUSE SOCIETY FORMED

Responding to the photograph in the last issue of the "Courier", a society to preserve and govern the Middle Intervale Meeting House was formed this autumn. Officers elected include Stanley Howe, President; Steve Wight, Vice-President; Geraldine Howe, Secretary; Augustus Carter, Treasurer; Directors: James Alger, Elizabeth Carter, Agnes Haines, Marge Noll and Mary Verenis. Memberships are available and funds are needed. Please support this effort by contacting any officer or director.

Bethel Historical Society
Box 12
Bethel, Maine 04217

10 SOCIETY MEMBER RE-ELECTED TO LEGISLATURE

Society member Karen L. Brown who serves on the Program Committee was re-elected to the Legislature in the November election. Reflecting her interest in the work of the Society, Representative Brown successfully sponsored legislation to provide state funds to mark the graves of Revolutionary War soldiers and worked on legislation to exempt historical societies and museums from the state sales tax.

SOCIETY RECEIVES ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The Society recently announced the receipt of a gift of \$50,000 from the William Bingham, 2nd, Trust for Charity. This gift is for endowment, and the Trustees of the William Bingham, 2nd Trust for Charity have informed the Society that subsequent gifts will result in a total endowment of \$250,000 from this source.

In honor of Dr. Sidney W. Davidson the Society has entitled this endowment "Sidney's Fund." Dr. Davidson, a resident of Brooklyn Heights, New York and of the New York law firm Davidson, Dawson & Clark, has long been associated with Bethel as a former President of the Trustees of Gould Academy. It was his initiative which led to the purchase and restoration of the Moses Mason House which was presented to the Society by the William Bingham, 2nd Trust for Charity in 1974. The Moses Mason House, built in 1813, is one of the most attractive small museums of northern New England with remarkable 19th century murals. Dr. Davidson was the moving force in its meticulous restoration for which Dr. Walker O. Cain, architect of New York, was largely responsible.

The Bethel Historical Society has an active program with the current membership over 300.

This splendid gift generates confidence in the long range future of the Society. The Society realizes, however, that in the last analysis its continuing strength depends upon the efforts of all members. Dr. Davidson's contribution and the assistance of the William Bingham, 2nd Trust for Charity are the beginning, not the end, of the process of securing the future of the Society.